

The Marquis *De Grana*, the King of *Spain's* Vice-Roy  
in the *Spanish-Netherlands*, His *Mandatory Letter* to  
all Commanders, Officers, and Soldiers, to Resist  
the *French*, and Repel Force with Force.

*Done out of the Original from Brussels.*

**T**HE Peace of *Nimeguen* having been concluded upon such Conditions, as *France* it self desir'd, We had all the reason in the World to hope, That this Peace would have been put in Execution, and Observed on their Part. But instead of contenting themselves with the Advantages which they have got by their Demands, and which we were willing to Sacrifice for the Repose of Christendom, They have retarded for several Months the quitting of the Garrisons which should have been surrendred back to his *Catholick Majesty*, wasted by excessive Quartering of Soldiers those Places which should have been restored, as well as those which really and truly belong'd to him, and Rul'd all his Majesties Subjects, as well by Extortion of Contributions, beyoud the Time limited by the *Eighteenth Article* of the Peace, as by several undue Exactions and Sums already pay'd, and oppressive Quota's with which His Majesty has been charg'd. And altho' after all this, and the opening the Conference of *Courtray*, for an amicable reconciliation of all Differences between the Two Crowns, we did not expect any other Acts of Violence, the Commissioners named on both Sides were hardly arrived at the Place appointed, but the *French* enter'd *Hainault* and *Flanders*, with a great Army, with an intention, as they have done, to make themselves Masters of the City of *Chievres*, and several other Towns and Villages. They have got the Possession of *Charlemont*, through their Threats of a general Invasion into these Countries, two Months before the Time prefixed by the Treaty of Peace, to restore that Fortref, or else to procure the Surrender of *Dinant*, and after that kept both those Places to themselves. And farther having a design to encroach always upon their

Neighbours, and make themselves sole Arbitrators of their Priviledges, they have Erected a Pretended Chamber of Re-union at *Metz*, they have caused to be adjudged to themselves, under unsufferable pretences, the County of *Chiny*, and other Lands and Territories belonging to His Catholick Majesty. And to make good those Proceedings never before practis'd in Times of Peace, the said *French* have caused several Bodies of Armed Forces to invade and pillage the Countries belonging to his Most Catholick Majesty; carry'd away, and receiv'd Ransoms of several Prisoners; possessed themselves of almost all the Dutchey of *Luxemburg*, with several Lands in the Provinces of *Hainault*, *Namur*, and others; blocked up the City of *Luxemburg* it self, and made all his Majesties Subjects deeply sensible of all the Effects of a fierce and cruel War.

And tho' his most Catholick Majesty, out of his desire to preserve the Peace of Christendom, had made use of none but Friendly means to stop these proceedings, they have all prov'd ineffectual, notwithstanding all the Remonstrances made on his Part at the Conference at *Courtray*, where the most Christian King's Advocate could not be brought to give any Answer to the Complaint about renewing of open Hostility, for which Reparation ought to have been made in the first place; and not to do as they did, set on foot at the same time, and press with a great deal of heat, New Pretensions to *Alost* and other Places, the unjustness of which Pretensions, when it came to be laid open, and that the King's Advocate declared his willingness to refer himself to the Decision of the Commissioners of the Two Crowns, or in Case their Judgements were equally divided, to that of Arbitrators

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 tratots to be equally chosen on both sides, according to the Contents of the Treaty of Peace, yet the Conference was broken off by the *French* Commissioners, who declared to those of His Catholick Majesty, that his most Christian Majesty, having intelligence, that the Great Turk was designing a War against his Imperial Majesty, was resolved to leave no cause of Jealousie or Suspicion, which might hinder the Christian Princes from Opposing the Common Enemy; for which reason he resolved to raise the Siege of *Luxemburg*, and refer his Differences with *Spain* to the King of *Great Britain*. However tho' the *French* Commissioners were not ignorant that the *Spanish* Deputies were not qualified to accept of the said Arbitration, and had also told the other, that they had receiv'd no Order about it, yet the *French* departed, refusing to receive so much as one Paper more, under pretence that their Commission was out. Which was all one as if his Catholick Majesty had been obliged to refer his Differences with *France* to one single Arbitration, chosen by the most Christian King, contrary to the Law of Nations, and the Tenor of the Treaty of Peace, procured by the Mediation of the King of *Great Britain*. In the Execution of which, nothing could have been more Natural than to have made use of the same Mediation which was several times sought by his Majesty and his Allies, and accepted by him, in pursuance of the kind Offices which the King of *Great Britain* had offered to that purpose. But *France* regarding nothing so much as the enlarging her Dominion, has refused this Mediation, and Marshal *D'Humières* upon the last Day of *August* past, and the fiftieth of the Siege of *Vienna*, the Brigadier *Dasfeld*, to give us Notice, That the most Christian King not having been able to obtain any Satisfaction in order to his Pretensions to *Alost*, and other Places mentioned in the Paper exhibited by his Advocate at *Courtray*, had sent him Orders to Rendevouz his Army and to enter those Countries, and yet all this while pretending he would Act nothing against the Peace, if he were not interrupted in his Design, and that the *Spaniards* did not oppose his Demands. Which seeming to us so much the more Astonishing, in regard it belong'd to *France* to pursue her Pretences by the regular means propounded in the Treaty of *Nimegen*, or to enter into a Negotiation by the Mediation of the King of *England*, and that therefore it was a manifest Contradiction to pretend at the same time,

not to Act against the Peace, and yet employ force of Arms to obtain that by Violence which was to be at the Disposal of Formal Justice.

We therefore upon the whole return'd this Answer to the Brigadier, That his Commission strangely surpris'd us; That we thought our selves in a profound Peace; and that the Treaty of *Nimeguen* had distinctly explained and determin'd how all differences were to be adjusted in an Amicable manner; that no man could well believe, especially considering the present Condition of Christendom, that ever any alterations would have been made so contrary to the said Peace; That his most Catholick Majesty had an Ambassador at *Paris*, and the most Christian King another at *Madrid*, where the Demands should have been propounded on both sides, That his Majesty had entrusted him to defend, not to surrender up those Provinces, or any part of 'em.

But the King of *France* not content with so rational an Answer, and continuing to put his Claim to the decision of a War, has caused several Body's of Armed Forces to fall with ruin and havock upon the Territories and Subjects of his Catholick Majesty, without taking the least Notice of the kind offers of the King of *England*, or of what the Pope has tender'd by his Extraordinary Nuntio, and others of the Allies. He has seized upon the Cities and Towns of *Leffines*, *Beaumont*, *Chimay*, *Walcourt*, *Bouignés*, and others, where his Troops for these five Weeks and more have committed and still continue to commit all manner of Violences in all parts under Obedience to his Catholick Majesty; sending their Commands for the payment of vast Contributions double and treble what was pay'd in the War. They have fallen upon his Majesties Subjects, they have taken away their Cattel, and Corn, and other Provisions, carry'd away Prisoners, beat down Houses, and committed an abundance of other Enormities, which visibly tends to an Absolute Breach. Seeing therefore, we have used all Amicable Means, since all Interposition and Mediation proves ineffectual, nor can prevail to bend and mollifie the Rigor, with which the *French* Troops continue to overwhelm His Majesties Subjects to their Total destruction, and while the Injuries they endure do but serve to bring a greater continually upon 'em, and so that they have most feelingly besought us, not to permit them to be reduced under the Servitude of *France*, by such a ruinous Desolation. We find our selves obliged by the Duty of our Charge, to give Order to all Generals, Governours of Provinces, Serjeant Majors of Battalia; Particular Governours, Commanders, Chiefs, Masters of Camp, Collonels, Captains, and all other Officers and Soldiers, as well Horse as Foot, of what Nation or Quality soever; and to all his Majesties Subjects, to Oppose all such Attempts and Proceedings of the Enemy, in the Territories of his Majesty, to repell Force by Force, and to make use of such means as God and Nature has afforded them, to defend and guard themselves from the unheard of Violences and Cruelties which they commit. Commanding you hereby to be Conform to these Commands, and to do and cause to be executed all things according to the Tenor of these Presents, by all that are under your Commands. *Brussels*, Octob. 12. 1683.

Signed, O. H. M. D'ALCARETTO.